



The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

June 2024



LANGUAGE

This article may sound familiar to many of you. It is largely based on the first reading for Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21). In that text we heard about the coming of the Holy Spirit and the resultant miracle of languages. The disciples were able to proclaim the gospel to the large crowds of people in Jerusalem, each in their own language. Doesn't that sound wonderful? I would love to be able to learn languages that completely and quickly!

Of course, that isn't how it works. Languages can be quite difficult to learn. Most of us have studied another language at some point in our lives; some have study more than one. But I would wager that the majority of us have lost any fluency we might have had in those languages. And why is this? One simple concept: use it or lose it! If we do not exercise our languages, we lose fluency rapidly.

This doesn't just go for the typical languages we think of like English, German, Spanish, etc. It goes for all the languages we learn. If we don't exercise the languages of our relationships, we will lose fluency in those. Think, for instance, of the special language that babies and toddlers often have. How are parents able to understand those unusual languages? They are practicing them regularly by being engaged with their children! Or the special languages we have within family units or groups of friends. If we fall out of touch with people, we lose the language we used to share with them, the common experiences and references that litter our speech can disappear.

Now we draw to my major point. The same concept (use it or lose it) also applies to the language of faith. Our

fluency in the language of our faith relationships is dependent upon our practicing that language. And we do this best in the arena of our faith relationships. But we in the church have done a terrible job of implementing this concept. We acknowledge the facts of this concept, but then, we don't do it! Instead, we relegate the language of faith, and its exercise, to an hour on Sunday mornings and a few minutes here and there throughout the week (mostly before meals and bedtime). No wonder the 20-35 age range is largely unchurched...they've hardly even heard the language of faith, much less have they learned it! With this in mind, I have some homework for you all. After this article you will find a "faith vocabulary" list. Please go through this list on your own or with others (at your own pace, maybe one or two words after your evening meal?) and talk/think/journal about what each word means to you. Share experiences of these concepts. Practice the language of faith!

In Christ,
Pastor Jon

Faith vocabulary list: Absolution, Angels, Apocalypse, Baptism, Belief, Christ, Christian, Church, Commandments, Communion, Confession, Conversion, Creation, Creator, Cross, Doubt, Evangelism, Evil, Faith, Father, Forgiveness, God, Good, Gospel, Grace, Heaven, Hell, Holy Spirit, Hospitality, Idolatry, Incarnation, Judgment, Law, Messiah, Mystery, Neighbor, Pentecostal, Proclamation, Redeemer, Repentance, Resurrection, Revelation, Righteous, Sabbath, Sacrament, Sacred, Saint, Salvation, Scripture, Sin(ner), Son, Trinity, Truth, Prayer, Word, Worship

CONGREGATION COUNCIL



The May Council meeting was held on May 14, 2024.

In attendance: Pastor Jon Nelson, Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt, Julie Meeks, Jeffery Berry, Nancy Egloff, Pam Buckley, Paul Reier, J.R. Lyons, Corey Knestrick, Susan Kauffman, Brandon Cave, Roberta Sulouff, Alison Carney

- Approved a motion to move forward with contractor Cox Powell for the HVAC replacement project, with additional information expected by June Council meeting.
- Proceeding with nominations for Council and Endowment Committee.
- Seeking additional contractor estimates for installation of automatic accessible front doors.
- Received resignations from Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt and Parish Nurse Diana Tiller-Dichtel. Gratitude was expressed for their faithful service and for sharing their talents and blessings. Pastor Alex has accepted a full-time call at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Hanover, Pa. Diana remains actively involved with St. Stephen, though not continuing in the Parish Nurse role.
- Preparing for June congregational meeting (June 16, following worship).
- Approved a motion to receive Benjamin Berry as a full member of the congregation through Affirmation of Baptism.
- Approved a motion to extend an offer to the top candidate for position of Preschool Director for the 2024-2025 school year.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for June 11.

Alison Carney, Secretary, Congregation Council



JUNE

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



We will hold our June business meeting on **Sunday, June 16**. Our June meeting will include a midyear review and update,

election of three to Congregational Council, election of one to the Endowment Committee, Finance Committee report, a report from the Preschool regarding the completed program year, review of the HVAC proposal, Ministry Plan next steps, and recognitions and celebrations. and. More details are available at this [link](#).

HEATING VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM (HVAC)



Our church HVAC has been described as “Byzantine.” While not dating to the 5th century, it consists of three separate systems with some components going back to the 1960s. There is even a large

abandoned unit (do not open the utility closet off the Preschool Bear classroom).

As in olden days, the switch over from heat to air conditioning is a complicated, multi-step process only done twice a year. Some parts are failing, requiring frequent and costly repairs. For all these reasons and more, Congregation Council representatives have been meeting with multiple HVAC contractors to get options, plans and cost estimates.

With four contractor proposals, including one low-impact proposal from our current maintenance contractor, the Council is prepared to present a concrete plan going forward. The work would occur when the Preschool is not in session in the summer of 2025. Details will be shared before the June Congregation Meeting for a vote and launch of a capital campaign.

Lou Rossiter



JUNE

	Spencer Lawson	
2	Karen Chenault Tim Weidman	Sara Osborn
3	Leonard Bosworth Rosa Parks	
4	Denny Krieger	Stephanie West
6	Jack Harris (90!)	Brad Leek
7	York Doerr	
8	Ron Harris	Becky Pittman
9	Ethan Jansson	Rita Kristiansen
10	Charles Osborn	
11	Randy Punched	
12	Christina Nelson	Peter Raquet
14	Terry Hinders	Sandy Reed-Bryant
15	Ruth Fenstermaker	Susie Yancey
16	Greta Zimbauer	Jon Nelson
20	Lou Rossiter	
21	Michael Powell	
22	Carol Harman	Audrey Root
23	Brandon Cave Alaina Dabel	Brian Crittenden
25	Carrie Bailey Zhou Hui Stauffer	Jeri Meermans
26	Susan Britcher	Christine Drake
27	Donna VanDuyse	
29	Sherry Phipps	
30	Lisa Fisher	Linda Olson

PICNIC IN THE PARK



We will celebrate the start of summer, our high school graduates, and Pastor Alex at a picnic on **Sunday, June 2**. We will gather at **Freedom Park** ([the shelter closest to the playground](#)) at 12:00 pm. Please sign up in the bulletin so we can plan food accordingly. Hamburgers, hot dogs, water, lemonade, and paper products will be provided, please bring a side or dessert to share.



MEN'S & WOMEN'S BREAKFASTS

- **June 4** – Women are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Tuesday** of this month.
- **June 6** – Men are invited to join together for breakfast the first **Thursday** of this month.

Both gatherings take place at **8:00 am** at the Colonial Pancake House, at the corner of Page Street and Penniman Road, Williamsburg, VA. The get-togethers promote conversation and friendship in a casual setting.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We have moved to our summer schedule of one joint worship service. We will have coffee at **9:00 am** and worship at **9:45 am** on these Sundays. This worship service will be live-streamed as well. We hope that this joint service will help foster connections between "8:30 folk" and "11:00 folk" as well as give our worship leaders a lighter Sunday morning for these weeks of summer.

Our final joint service will be on "God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday" on **September 8**, which will give us some extra time for a service project that morning.

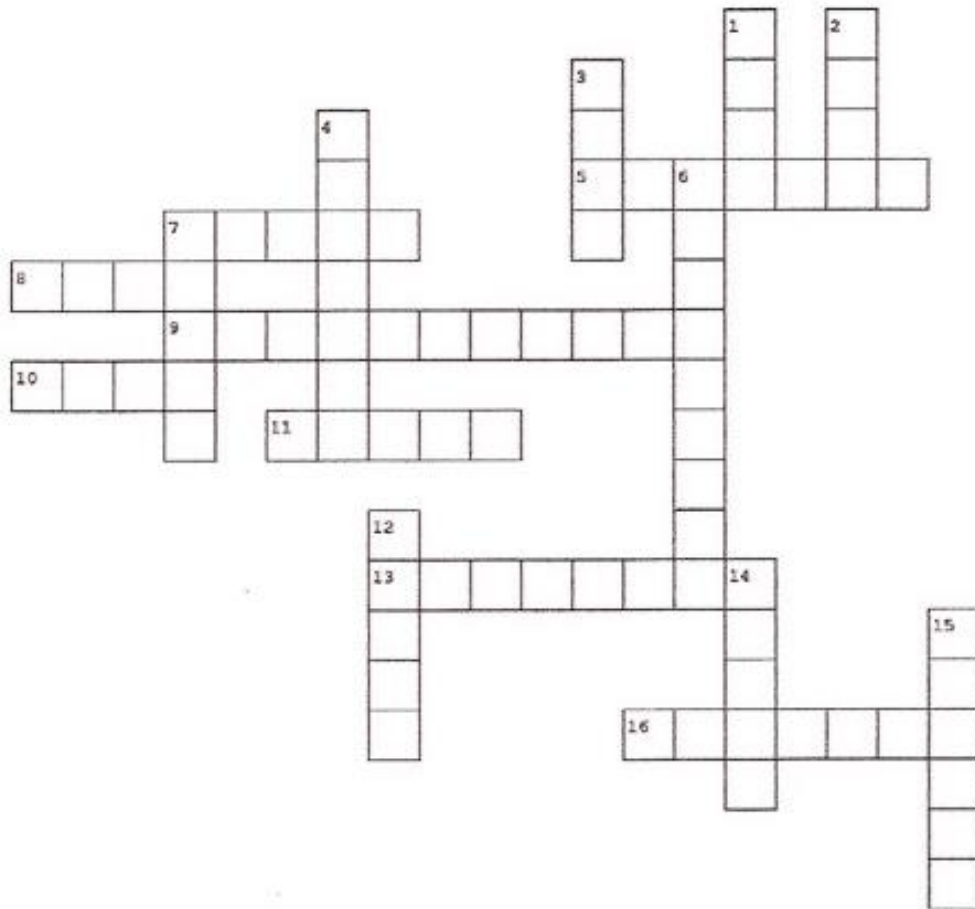
Giving Statements for the first quarter of 2024 are available for pick-up in the Gathering Space.

Please pick up your statement and help us save on postage.



MUSIC NOTES

choir



Across

- 5. the highest voice type
- 7. #
- 8. b
- 9. usually a keyboardist supporting the choir
- 10. sign on musical staff to denote pitches
- 11. Greek for "Lord"
- 13. detached/separated
- 16. soprano, alto, tenor, bass

Down

- 1. a curved line denoting a smooth phrase
- 2. a religious song or poem of praise to God
- 3. the lowest voice type
- 4. two or more parts singing together
- 6. the 50th day following Easter
- 7. 5 lines and 4 spaces
- 12. a sacred song or hymn, also a Book of the Bible
- 14. instrument with pipes and usually a pedal board
- 15. choral composition based on Biblical passage

ANSWERS ON PAGE 9

Karen Ives, Music Director



Thank you very much for your congregation's gift to Avalon of \$700 on April 29, 2024. We appreciate your continuing support and would like to welcome you to the Advocate level of giving for 2024. Your support is important.

For over 43 years, Avalon has been there to answer the calls for help and offered comprehensive services for many thousands of survivors and their children. We have been there only because of the generosity of our community and people like you. At Avalon, we envision an aware and engaged community that works together to promote healthy relationships and to end domestic and sexual violence. Thank you for being a part of that vision!

Mary S. Hand, Development Coordinator



I am so grateful for your contribution of \$700. Your support brings the priceless gift of care, comfort, and compassion to guests of Hospice House and their loved ones as they share their final days together.

We do not charge a fee for our services to individuals and families, so we thank you for helping remove that burden from those we serve. Your gift also allows loved ones to be just that - loved ones - without also having to be caretakers.

Having served our community for the past 40 years, we are appreciative of the support from individuals like you. Thank you again for your generous contribution.

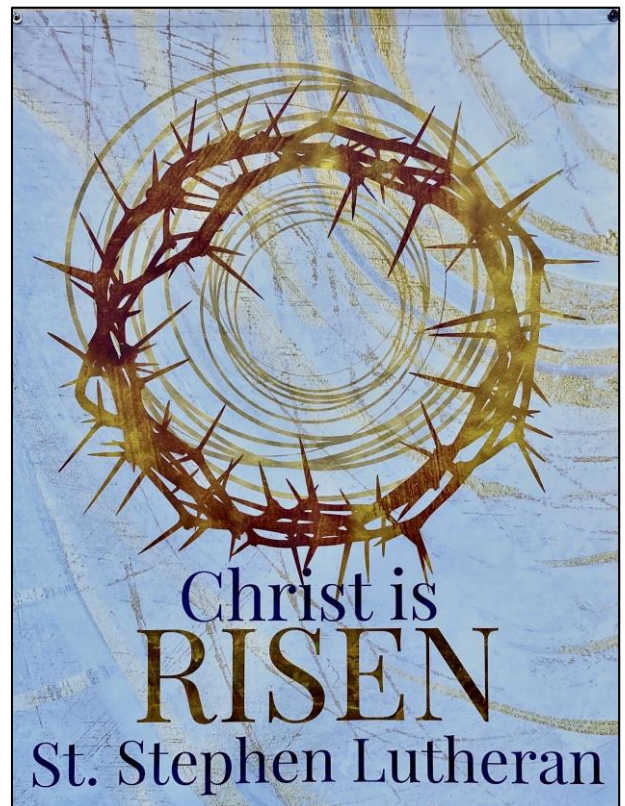
Brandon Randall, Executive Director



THE CHURCH MOUSE HEARS

... that William & Mary Director of Gymnastics **Mike Powell** was recently honored with the prestigious Plumeri Award for Athletics Leadership Excellence. This award recognizes and rewards outstanding coaches and staff whose core virtues and accomplishments help to define excellence in intercollegiate athletics at William & Mary. The award announcement stated that "Using the medium of gymnastics, Powell has enhanced the education and growth of exceptional W&M student-athletes through excellence in athletics, academics, and community engagement."

... and that Powell Law, an immigration law firm, has celebrated its 10th anniversary. **Sharon Powell** said that "Each individual, each family, entrusted to our care, becomes a part of our narrative, a testament to the diversity and resilience of the human spirit. We see the full spectrum of humanity and the globe in our office – immigration touches every facet of society and I love that we get to be part of the mix."





STEWARDSHIP ESSENTIALS

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

In recent months I have shared some of my favorite Old Testament passages that help me think about how I live as a steward of God's blessings. This month I wish to shift to the New Testament, and I begin with the passage above – a portion of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel.

Jesus begins by telling his listeners (disciples and others) that they are the salt of the earth. So, what is it to be salt? In Jesus's time, salt was used not only to augment the flavor of food, but also to preserve food. So it seems to me that as followers of Jesus we are not only to add savor to the world around us, but we are also to be the means by which God preserves the world around us. Without God's life-giving activity in the world, the world (by this I mean human society) inevitably turns to self-destructive ways. This is at the heart of Paul's distinction between living in the Spirit and living in the flesh. Without God's presence in our lives, we turn inward upon ourselves at the expense of others and our relationships with them. But thanks be to God, Jesus has called us out of our death-dealing patterns of living through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. As we seek to live out our calling as followers of Christ we cast the light of God's grace around us, enlivening our relationships with the light of God's love. When we live

in the pattern established by Jesus, others may see the goodness of God and be drawn to the light of God's grace. It is as it was when God called Abram and said to him, I will bless you so that you will be a blessing to others.

The great blessing of stewardship is not that we are blessed (though that is most certainly true!), but that we become channels of God's blessings to others. That is God's will for our lives. And so we are stewards of the mysteries of God and instruments of God's grace for those around us. Thanks be to God!

Your brother in Christ,
Jim Larsen

SAVE THE DATE! WOMEN'S RETREAT AT ST. STEPHEN



Mark your calendars for the Women's Retreat events and worship.

- Evening social **Friday, September 27, 2024**
- Day retreat **Saturday, September 28, 2024**

UPCOMING SHARED MINISTRY EVENTS FOR WOMEN

As part of our shared ministry with Our Saviour's, we have been invited to participate in the Virginia Synod Women's Convention which this year will be held at Our Saviour's from **July 26-27**. Plans are being finalized, and I will distribute more information as it becomes available. Our Saviour's Lutheran Church has an active women's group (Lydia Circle) which meets monthly, and we are welcome to attend their meetings.

In addition to the WELCA Convention, there is an All-Lutheran Women's Retreat planned for **November 7-9, 2024** in Glen Allen, VA. The retreat leader will be Author Jacqueline Bussie. I will post a flyer for anyone interested.

Pam Buckley



ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

The Mother's Day brunch for our 4-year-old classes was a success. A huge thank you to **Pam Buckley** for her flower decorations they were a big hit! Ms. Napier started off the day's festivities by reading a wonderful Mother's Day book then off to the Fellowship Hall to decorate picture frames. After eating yummy treats with Mom each child had their photo taken in front of the banner they made for their moms. A great day was had by all.



STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. STEPHEN



Spring has sprung! The air is warm...The bees are buzzing and birds are chirping. The flowers are in full bloom and absolutely gorgeous. The air has wonderful fragrances. We live in a beautiful town that attracts visitors from far and wide. What's not to like about our surroundings?

Despite all of this, some of us will still feel down in the dumps. Sometimes the reasons are obvious and fully understandable to us. Sometimes these feelings just pervade and preoccupy us for no obvious reason. We can try to ignore them and hope they just go away. We can try to just shake them off. We can sometimes just go and have a beer with a friend and feel better about ourselves and life in general.

But when those simple steps don't work and the sadness, depression or disappointments persist, it may be time to get some help. It's true that some people can be so "down in the dumps" that a professional medical therapist or psychiatrist may be the best route to go and even prescribing of antidepressant medications may be needed. For the vast majority of us experiencing milder disappointments or depression, getting the help of a Stephen Minister to confidentially discuss your concerns and walk through your situations may be the best way to go.

Stephen Ministers are trained church members who are lay Christian counselors who can help those suffering through difficult life situations. Stephen Ministers meet with those that they are caring for on a weekly basis for as long as needed to help them get beyond whatever situation they are facing and having problems with. Their services are voluntary, free, and confidential. Confidential supervision is provided to the Stephen Minister to make sure that optimal care is provided. Such care could be invaluable for someone going through difficult times!

If you or someone you know or love is going through such difficulties and you feel they could benefit from having a Stephen Minister, please confidentially let either **Pastor Jon Nelson** or **Stephen Leader Bill Dichtel** know of the potential need for those services. We want

to make sure that all of the needs of members of the Congregation are being served.

Bill Dichtel, Stephen Leader
Cell Phone (757) 232-5334

A HUGE THANK YOU



Serving as Parish Nurse of St. Stephen Lutheran Church has been an honor. I was commissioned in April of 2018 and have had the pleasure of serving this congregation for six years. This has been a most memorable six years.

We have been through a pandemic during which I was able to monitor the CDC website and help to guide our members safely with the most up-to-date information. During that same time, I assisted the preschool with interpreting the guidance from CDC and state agencies.

I have had the great privilege of providing members of the congregation with rides to doctor appointments, accompanying some to have procedures, and stood with some to help interpret information given to them by their medical team members. I have given families information on making hard decisions regarding moving themselves or family members to assisted living, long term care or even just senior communities. I have held the hand of members who didn't have long to live and provided help as needed to families.

I have joyfully led the team of congregation members providing communion to our sick and shut-ins who are unable to come to our services. Additionally, I have scheduled our greeters and coordinated the Ministry Fair, which provides information on all of our ministries emphasizing the need for more help. I have also completed the 50-hour training for Stephen Ministry, enhancing my work as Parish Nurse.

This is to say I have truly enjoyed my ministry as Parish Nurse for St. Stephen. I also must say that I will resign my position at the end of June 2024. I now have to spend time taking care of myself. I will continue to lead the home communion ministry and the greeters. I will also continue to be a communion assistant, help with altar guild and Stephen Ministry. I am not leaving the church so I still look forward to seeing you all.

Diana Tiller-Dichtel, Parish Nurse



JUNE BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES



PRAYERS

The significance of baptism, Luther teaches in the *Small Catechism*, is “that the old creature in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”

Your baptismal anniversary is an opportunity to light a baptismal candle and to give some prayer time to reflecting on your experiences during the past year on your journey in faith!

Pastor Jon Nelson

4	Amanda Buckley	Melissa Buckley
6	Alan Balma	Danya Zimbauer
12	Doug Moore	Art Nelsen
13	Rachael Wiers	
15	Jenni Punchard	
16	Jane deSolms	
17	Ethan Owens	
18	Sarah Harms	Reed Nester
21	Jessica Harms	Erich Zimbauer
25	Karl Zimbauer	
28	Terri Larsen	

Others who were baptized in June:

Bill Arnold	Pete Davis
Brad Leek	Jon Lund

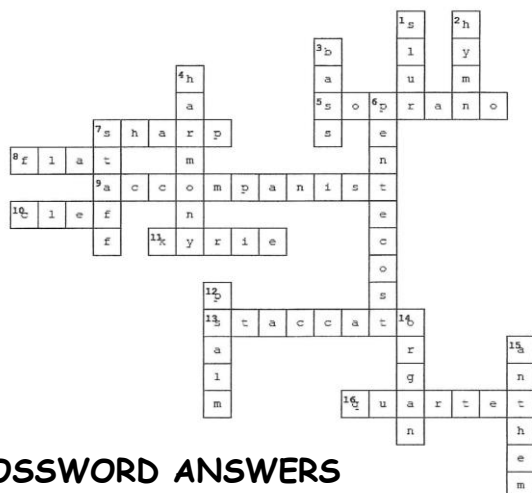
Were you baptized in June but your name isn't on the list above? Let us know!

Join your prayers for healing with God's desires for **Trudi Arnold, Aaren Battle, Ed Brown, Kristin Carter, Steve Grant, Jack Harris, Jim Ivey, Sharon Jacobs, Marilyn Johnson, Evelyn Kernan, Jim Mayfield, and Susan Neidlinger**

Pray for those unable to come to worship: **Martin Bleck, Ed Brown, Birdie Burton, York Doerr, Bob and Angie Groom, Edith Haecker, Pat Janot, Jeanne Nelson, Darlene Simon, and Kay Wasaff.**

God has blessed Jack Harris with **90** years of life! His birthday is Thursday the June 6 – send him a card!

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Bob Alt, Donald and Carol Baum, Rose Baumgarten, Sally Blackburn, Bob Britcher, Linda Bonfiglio, Mary Bloom, Amy Carl, Karin Cavanaugh, Judy Craun, Sophia Czajkowski, Judy Drezek, Ginny Mauney Fox, Joel Gillespie, Joan and Frank Goodhart, Deanna Harbison, Nick Havola, Bradley Kim Joan and Laurie Heintzelman, Char Henry, Lisa Hill, Jaxon Ireland, The Jacobs Family, Brian Johnson, Don Johnson, Connie Kendrick, The Kennedy family, Marnah Lund, Laura Margolin, Doug Mayes, Jack Mayfield, The Keith Meins family, Liz Montalvo, Brian Moore, Becky Murphy, Ed Moninger, Bob Myers, Silvana Oderisi, Denise Ogborn, Lori Ogborn, Paula Rega, Kathy Reynolds, Clarice Rohling, Marci Ries, Sharon Rogers, Betty Roth, Kurtis Schultz, Lou Schuster, Inge Seiter, Kelsey Slay, Vasili Soultoukis, Chad Strausbaugh, Charley Underdahl, and Caleb Winig.



CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Virginia Lutherans

FAITHFUL + BOLD + SERVING

Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



St. Stephen Lutheran Church
612 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185

The Quill www.saintstephenlutheran.net June 2024

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<i>Treasurer</i>	Pete Davis	757-345-0596
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The Quill is published monthly by
 St. Stephen Lutheran Church
 612 Jamestown Road
 Williamsburg, VA 23185

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Article deadline: Fifteenth of the month.